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21 OCTOBER 1980 EGYPT: OPPOSITION PRESS COVERAGE

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21 October 1980

Near East/North Africa Report

(FOUO 37/80)

Egypt: Opposition Press Coverage

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NEAR EAST/NORTH AFRICA REPORT

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EGYPT: OPPOSITION PRESS COVERAGE

AL-TAQADDUM, Semi-weekly Internal Bulletin of National Progressive Unionist Grouping (NPUG) Party

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EGYPT

NEW DEVELOPMENTS SEEN RESTORING FOREIGN CONCESSIONS

Cairo AL-TAQADDUM in Arabic 15 May 80 p 5

[Article: "The Other Face of a New Phase: Foreign Concessions Return; Foreign Partners Buy Up the Public Sector; Prices Surge Ahead in an Unprecedented Race; Houses are for Those Who Can Get Them"]

[Text] The news of government reshuffles and changes have been dominating the Egyptian press and preoccupying the corridors of officialdom, but there are other news and changes that have been occurring beneath the surface and drawing attention in a direction completely opposite to that taken by the press. The reality of the Egyptian situation suggests that there are five phenomena which represent grave danger.

The first phenomenon is that of the return of concessions. According to the law pertaining to new communities, a foreigner is now entitled to get a concession to run the Suez Canal, a streetcar company or an electric utility. as in the days of the belgians. A foreigner can now manage and utilize a public utility, a port, a road or even an entire city for a period of 50 years.

This is what the law says. The first shot was to invite bids for the construction of the new Damietta port from anyone who would like to build it, run it or utilize it. After 40 or 50 years, its ownerships would revert to the Egyptian Government.

The second serious phenomenon is the trend toward a partial liquidation of the public sector. Under the current law, the state owns 100 percent of the capital of about 400 companies. Now, however, the law faces the possibility of amendment, whereby public ownership would drop to 51 percent and the private sector, both Egyptian and foreign, would be invited to participate. What is more serious is that actual attempts are being made to violate the law. An example of these attempts, which has been reported in the press, affects the (Ideal) Company. This is the attempt to sell 51 percent of the ownership of this successful and profitable company to a French concern, in which case the Egyptian side would be the minority side. Large-scale foreign participation in

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successful public sector firms is another danger. It would change the basis on which the Egyptian economy stands, and threaten millions of people working in the public sector, who have benefited from opportunities of employment, learning and a wage level higher than that in the private sector.

The third phenomenon is that prices have become a mine that can blow up everything. This has prompted the state to adopt urgent measures in an attempt to contain the situation. But can the government's actions succeed? The reasons behind this situation will persist, because they stem from policies, not just procedures. Those reasons make us say that we are facing a new situation which is different than previous situations in terms of price increases. Devaluating the Egyptian pound, speculating on the dollar, permitting the importation of consumer and luxury goods, permitting so-called imports without the need for currency conversion, weakening industrial production units, unleashing economic freedom at home and encouraging parasitic elements--all these factors will make the upcoming wave of price increases exceed anything that happened before. 1980 began in this fashion and the trend will get worse.

The fourth phenomenon is inseparable from the previous one. It extends the same phenomenon to the sector of housing. The government has submitted to the People's Assembly a so-called national housing policy, and has prepared a bill that would abolish the rent committee and link rent to the cost of construction, which is determined by the market. What market? The market of land speculations and of iron and concrete that are sold on the black market. When the wage committees are abolished, an apartment's rent would jump to 80 pounds. A particular class would thus be able to find housing, and this would change the features of the social division in the country. There will be a new division which will have social and political consequences--a division between those who have housing and those who do not.

Then there is the last phenomenon--one that does not need any elaboration: the growing restrictions against democracy and the opposition. As we have already said, it is a tangible phenomenon that does not require an explanation. The five phenomena project a new Egypt, one that is economically dependent, productively weak, crushed by a high cost of living and plagued by a growing conflict.

Are these the characteristics of the new phase? This is just a simple question in the middle of a flood of press reports that say that we are continuing the march of 'Urabi, Sa'd Zaghlul, Muhammad Farid and the July revolution!

[The following box appears at the end of this article]

From Our Party's Program

Our party strives for a redistribution of national income in the interest of the toiling classes of fellaheen, workers and employees. It aims at raising their income and at continuously reducing the gaps between the levels of income.

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EGYPT

NEW CUSTOMS TARIFF ASSAILED

Cairo AL-TAQADDUM in Arabic 15 May 80 p 6

[Article: "The New Customs Tariff Spe'ls Greater Deterioration for Our Local Industries"]

[Text] A few days ago, the newspapers reported under banner headlines the institution of a new customs tariff that would bring down the prices of food commodities and decrease customs fees on drugs, ready-made clothing, cars and household effects. We were told that in a matter of days prices will drop as a result of the new tariff. The objective truth about this new tariff, however, refutes such allegations. The first thing that strikes one about the new tariff is that it does not protect or encourage local industries. On the contrary, it would destroy what is left of the local industries because of unfair competition.

For example, with regard to the textiles sector, including both raw materials and ready-made clothing, it is noted that the new tax on wool, natural silk and cotton textiles is 25 percent. Under the old tariff, this tax ran up to 250 percent. The new tax on ready-made clothing made of cotton, wool or natural silk is 150 percent versus 250 percent under the old tariff.

It can be seen, therefore, that the decrease in the tariff on textiles and ready-made clothing means greater plight for our local industries. This is despite memos filed with the Central Accounting Bureau about conditions in this sector, and the huge stocks which fill stores and which cannot find an outlet on the local market. Clearly, the decrease in the tariff means greater profits and prosperity for the goods sold on al-Shawaribi Street, and for the boutiques which have become something akin to the national museums on Fu'ad Street and Sulayman Pasha Street.

At a news conference, Dr 'Ali Lutfi said that one of the major features of the new tariff is that it has decreased the ceiling of the present tax from 300 to 150 percent in the interest of social justice among the various classes of the people, and in accordance with sound taxation principles. But objective reality rejects such an argument, and shows

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that the decrease provided for in the new tariff is to the benefit of the class of merchants who make exorbitant incomes. It serves certain social classes which find it important to own such things as videocassette equipment (tariff fees on videocassette equipment under the old system was 1,300 pounds, but it dropped to about 600 pounds under the new system) and refrigerators of 15 cubic feet and more (fees on such refrigerators dropped from 200 percent to 150 percent). The poor ordinary Egyptian returning home from hard employment abroad used to pay the equivalent of 100 Egyptian pounds in dollars as a fee on a 10 cubic foot refrigerator he would bring back with him from abroad. Now, under the new tariff, he will have to pay about 150 pounds in dollars, and why--because the government wants to achieve a so-called social justice.

And what about expensive types of carpets. Under the old tariff, fees on an expensive carpet came to about 1,000 pounds, on the basis of a tariff of 300 percent. Today, the percentage is down to 150 percent or about 500 pounds.

The exemptions mentioned by Dr 'Ali Lutfi are not new but have been there for tens of years. In the old customs tariff, for example, all kinds of meats, fish, dairy products and cheeses were exempt from customs fees. Furthermore, all equipment and materials needed for agricultural production and the production of meats, eggs and dairy products were exempted from customs fees under the old system. These include cranes, bulldozers, dairy product equipment, harvesting machinery and equipment, fruit squeezing and processing equipment, and flour mill equipment. The old system also exempted equipment and machinery for the production of paper pulp, printing machinery, textile machinery of all kinds, and auxiliary construction machinery and materials: power drills, cranes, concrete mixers, cement, plaster, iron, etc. Also exempted were all the major kinds of seeds, such as cotton seeds, sesame seeds, as well as drugs and certain chemicals that go into the making of drugs.

This quick review of the new customs tariff shows that it does not protect or encourage local industries, and bears no relationship whatsoever with social justice among the various classes of the people.

Very clearly, the new customs tariff is meant to serve the merchants who make exorbitant incomes so that they may amass greater capitals and dispose of their inventories at the expense of the national industry and the public sector. It also seeks to serve certain social classes in Egyptian society which like to own such things as videocassette equipment and expensive carpets. This is the truth, whether the makers of the new tariff like it or not. We intend to undertake a more comprehensive study of the new customs tariff to expose its destructive effects on our economic and social life under the open door policy.

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EGYPT

IMPLICATIONS OF ABORTIVE RESCUE OPERATION IN IRAN DISCUSSED

Cairo AL-TAQADDUM in Arabic 15 May 80 p 11

[Article by Muhammad Sid Ahmad, Member of the General Secretariat of NPUG: "America's Abortive Operation in Iran and Its Consequences"]

[Text] There have been conflicting statements by Egyptian officials about Israel's assertion that American aircraft which participated in the operation designed to rescue the hostages had taken off from a base in southern Egypt. The chief of state said: "I have promised the American people that I will provide facilities for the rescue of the hostages and the defense of any Arab country in the Gulf. This is my policy." This statement, however, was not a clear indication whether the planes had actually flown out of Egypt. The matter became more mysterious when the prime minister expressed his "doubt" that the planes had taken off from Egypt, while the defense minister denied that categorically.

The Israeli newspaper MAARIV, however, settled the contradictions in no uncertain terms. (Yakov Aritz), the paper's military correspondent, wrote the following in the 24 April edition--24 hours before the rescue attempt began and before the world had even heard of it: "American air forces have resumed their intensified use of the Egyptian airport of Qina as a base for their operations. This indicates that an American plan is under way in preparation for intervention in Iran." MAARIV's Washington correspondent, (Rafael Mann), commenting on the news, wrote that "an American official who did not want his name to be known said that the United States does not want to use Israeli military facilities in this connection, to avoid deepening the rift between the United States and the Arab countries opposed to the Camp David accords." The two reports were prominently frontpaged by the Israeli newspaper.

The subject raises more than a question. Can the prime minister of Egypt be unaware of any American military activity in an Egyptian base subject to Egyptian sovereignty? Can the Egyptian defense minister make statements that are completely antithetical to the truth? Can Egypt participate in a military operation secretly planned by a superpower, namely the United States, against a nonaligned nation, namely Iran, then claim that

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it still adheres to nonalignment? Has Egypt become a better jumping board than Israel for American armed intervention against nonaligned nations?

At any rate, this was not the view of Israeli experts, especially after they were stunned by the dismal failure of the rescue attempt. Israelis recalled their success a few years ago in the Entebbe operation. One Israeli wrote: "War is an extension of politics by other means. Carter's political hesitation was extended to and reflected in his military hesitation. Hence, the failure of the rescue operation." Another Israeli said: "The failure of the rescue attempt cannot be ascribed just to bad luck, for it reflects definite shortcomings in planning, training and execution." Still a third Israeli wondered: "Now that America has demonstrated its military failure in dealing with Iran, can we be reassured about its ability to face the Soviet Union militarily? Having failed to protect American citizens that have been subjected to harm, can it protect distant allies?" A fourth Israeli predicted that the inevitable outcome of the failure is to "enhance the advancement of Islamic militancy, tighten the Soviet grip on Afghanistan, and increase the tension in American-European relations."

American Secretary of State Cyrus Vance has resigned in protest against an operation that was the culmination of a series of steps by American diplomacy which have increased international tension and dealt a real blow to America's prestige. The outcome is bound to be negative.

What concerns us, however, is the impact of the failure of the rescue attempt on America's policy in the Middle East, particularly the Camp David accords and the presently stalemated autonomy negotiations. What is certain is that the pro-Western Arab regimes, on which the United States depends for its oil needs, hold America responsible for their present instability as a result of the separate peace between Egypt and Israel which is blessed by Washington. It is also certain that these regimes have become more worried because it has been established that the Camp David accords are quite incapable of providing any solution for the Palestine problem, the heart of the conflict, thereby exposing the entire region to growingly serious disturbances and upheavals. On top of all this, it is now clear that the United States is incapable of protecting those regimes militarily. This is to say that the regimes are no longer endangered exclusively by the factors of frustration, rebellion and rejection, which are rife throughout the region, but are also jeopardized by their friends and protectors in the West and the United States. Perhaps this is the secret behind Saudi Arabia's oversensitivity to the film "Death of a Princess."

Indeed, Israel is now in a better and stronger position to tell America that it needs Israel's deterrent power to protect Western interests from the threat of disturbances in the area. As a result, the Israeli Government can now be more intransigent in the autonomy negotiations and more insistent on imposing its own concept of autonomy. This would not make it easier to break out of the stalemate and reach an agreement before 26 May.

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The assumption that the United States holds 99 percent of the cards presupposes that the United States has the military and political means of a superpower. But the abortive operation in Iran has exposed America's lack of the military capabilities of a superpower. Its failure to bring other Arab parties into the separate peace process between Egypt and Israel had already demonstrated that America lacks the political capabilities of a superpower.

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SUPREME COUNCIL FOR CULTURE SEEN AS TOOL OF TOTALITARIAN STATE

Cairo AL-TAQADDUM in Arabic 15 May 80 p 12

[Statement Issued by NPUG's Committee To Defend the National Culture on the Supreme Council for Culture: "The Supreme Council--The State Tightens Its Fist Around Ideas and People"]

[Text] Republican Decree No 150 for 1980 has set up the Supreme Council for Culture as a virtual alternative to the Ministry of Culture, which has been abolished. The establishment and organization of the new council are not isolated from preparations for what is called the restructuring of the state.

The Supreme Council for Culture is made up of four divisions which in turn are divided into 27 committees. The four divisions are: the division of culture, the division of literature, the division of the arts and the division of the social sciences. The organization includes three houses of the arts--the house of the theater, the house of music and the house of popular arts. It also includes four national centers--the national center of the cinema, the national center of the theater, the national center of art and the national center of the child. The new setup retains the academy of the arts, the writers board and the antiquities agency.

Under the new system, the higher council for the sponsorship of literature and the arts, the general commission for the arts, and the commission for the cinema and the theater are abolished. The Arabic language board is reassigned to the ministry of education. The organizations which will begin operating under the new system are: the studios and film production company and the distribution and movie theaters company. A cultural council will be established in each governorate under the chairmanship of the governor, and there will be a directorate for culture in each governorate.

The pretext for the new setup is that the old forms of cultural activities have failed, primarily because they became unwieldy bureaucracies. Yet the new pyramid is no less bureaucratic. There is, however, a major new

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element. It is that the state is moving in the direction of lessening its support of culture and of considering culture ultimately as a commodity not a service. This is what the ministry of culture was supposed to have been fighting since its establishment in 1958. Consequently, the state is applying to cultural activities the same concept it has applied to free economic enterprise in the country. On the other hand, while the state is freeing itself economically of the various cultural organizations, it is seeking to tighten its grip around the entire spectrum of cultural activity under the slogan of democracy.

While it is claimed that the new unique organization which has no match in the world will be run by the intellectuals and men of culture, we find that no one was consulted before the new organization was set up. Commissions have been dissolved and replaced by companies. This virtually means that the new companies will be subject to the law of supply and demand--without consulting those who are involved in the field of culture. Nor were those working in the various fields of culture consulted about who should be appointed to the new organizations that have been set up, so that we may see democracy in action. Furthermore, nominations and appointments to the new organizations will be made within 10 days by decree. It is the state which will select whoever it wishes without any restriction. All this follows the People's Assembly's passage of the law for the protection of values from immorality, which is primarily directed against the intelligentsia.

The new totalitarian state which is hiding its real face behind the mask of democracy is seeking to subject all forms of cultural and intellectual activity, in all fields and walks of life, be they governmental or non-governmental, partisan or nonpartisan, to its control and censorship through members of the "intelligentsia" itself. This is indeed a unique setup, for one of the basic aims of the new higher council is to issue directives and recommendations to the national organizations working in the field of culture in line with the general policies of the state. Aside from the fact that the word "directives" is a polite euphemism for the real terms of "orders and instructions," hence censorship and control, the cultural societies will, under the new system, lose whatever relative independence they had in the past, even though they were administratively attached to the ministries of social affairs and culture. The various cultural organizations were able, each within its own concern and specialization, to draw up plans and goals for themselves. The new centralized system would not allow any form of independence.

The new system does not only take a single approach and direction in the field of political thought, but gives itself the right to subject "the criteria and specifications of artistic and intellectual excellence," as Article 10 of the new decree states, to political direction. This would intensify the present siege imposed around all forms of creativity and thought and reduce these forms to informational activities. All this is done in line with considerations which appear to be artistic and

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innocuous, so that no one may complain about control by the ruling party. Indeed, it is a unique system which involves itself in the affairs of culture and sets forth criteria for all activity in that field.

In the light of the above, the Committee to Defend the National Culture believes that the new totalitarian system will only exacerbate the gulf between official thought and art, on one hand, and popular thought and art, on the other. This stifling framework will only manage to induce the real artists and intellectuals, who are committed only to their own talents and the cause of the people, to break out of the new system. Meanwhile, the new system will be an expression of the economic activities of the predominant groups. Talents will grow outside this new setup, and the new establishment will be a spiritless structure incapable of expressing the real impulses of creativity, diversity and intellectual and artistic innovation. The intelligensia should oppose this new totalitarian way of controlling their minds, especially after the promulgation of the so-called law for the protection of values from immorality, oppose regulations that impose new disguised censorship on their thoughts and conscience, and oppose totalitarianism in every walk of life.

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MAJOR PROSPECTIVE SETBACKS TO WOMEN'S EMANCIPATION ALLEGED

Cairo AL-TAQADDUM in Arabic 15 May 80 p 13

[Article by Faridah al-Naqqash, Member of NPUG's Central Committee:
"Setbacks in the Feminist Cause."]

[Text] The cause of women's liberation is suffering serious setbacks. It would be no exaggeration to say that these setbacks jeopardize all the gains achieved by women in the last century, including the right to work, equal pay, amendments of the personal statute law, and, above all, the general tacit recognition by society at large of the status of women as full human beings.

The recent setbacks are represented by three major factors:

- 1) The call, which is quickly gaining ground within the People's Assembly, to write legislation that would set the age of 40 as retirement age for women, under the pretext that it would enable women to attend fully to their homes and children. This would deprive women of work at the height of their professional careers and potential, and create an army of unemployed women, with all the serious economic and social consequences of such a measure.
2. The encouragement of women to work part-time for half pay, and the follow-up campaigns in the press which have been playing up this idea as an ideal solution for the problems of raising children and house-keeping. These campaigns ignore the better social solution, which is to provide fair and just human conditions for the working and productive woman, so as to free her energies and her personality. The part-time part-pay solution, in addition to being a deferment of real or disguised unemployment, involves a patronizing and condescending view which sees women's employment as something superfluous and unnecessary--the same kind of view which suggests that women should retire at 40.
- 3) The referral to the People's Assembly of suggestions calling for a certain uniform for women which would eventually become mandatory, under the pretext of observing religious values and "concealing the indecencies

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of women." This is a most serious phenomenon which perhaps is the single most dangerous threat to the cause of women's liberation, because it crowns all the calls for returning women to their so-called natural place in the home, thereby depriving society of their contribution as a productive force, and depriving them of the possibility of economic independence, which would protect them from the unjust conditions that prevail in the society at present.

These phenomena undoubtedly reflect a deep crisis within society--a crisis of employment which finds its solution in gradually dispensing with legions of working women. It is also a crisis of culture which would push women, following the considerable progress they have made toward liberation (a cause associated with the national and social liberation of the country as a whole), back to a status of subservience and backwardness. This attempt to subjugate women is being given a phony religious character. Efforts are made to persuade women, who are weighed down by the burdens of their family responsibilities and their own careers, that the best solution is to relinquish their own gains and the gains of their families at one and the same time. What is most regrettable is that such campaigns have found leaders among women both inside and outside the People's Assembly.

This whole mess reveals the failure of the present feminist organizations to assume sound leadership of the women's liberation movement. At the same time, it demonstrates our bondage to the whole spectrum of backward ideas and concepts about the "biological" functions of women--a function which, we are told, is a most distinguished function basic to women and devoid of any social content.

The impending setback which threatens to undo the gains made toward achieving women's liberation makes us re-emphasize the need to establish the feminist wing of our party on sound theoretical bases concerning the cause of women's liberation. We must do it in a real militant fashion that would measure up to the tasks which rapidly occurring events are forcing on it. The foremost and most important task is to lead the cultural revolution and cement its foundations in the field of women's employment. This means pursuing, debating and refuting erroneous concepts and illusions about women, and exhorting the masses of working women to hold on to their positions, defend them, and join the struggle for a really free society in which women would be liberated from their double repression. This will not be possible at all, unless the masses of women in the cities and the countryside really and effectively join this struggle.

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NPUG PREPARES FOR ELECTIONS OF CORPORATE BOARDS OF DIRECTORS

Cairo AL-TAQADDUM in Arabic 15 May 80 p 14

[Article: "The Workers' Bureau Prepares for Elections to Boards of Directors of Companies"]

[Text] The NPUG's Central Workers Bureau has begun preparations for the campaign of elections to corporate boards of directors. It held a plenary meeting last Friday where several issues were discussed. They include: the present general conditions surrounding the elections and the possibility that the Socialist Prosecutor General might object to the nomination of a large number of party members. The bureau decided to move against measures being taken by the ruling party and the government, and to contact all democratic and labor organizations.

The bureau also decided to withhold approval of a suggestion to amend certain provisions of Law No 73 for 1973 which would change the term of elected members of boards of directors from 2 to 4 years. In rejecting this suggestion, the bureau held that the system of the boards of directors is not in need of an extension of the term of members as much as it is in need of legislation that would protect workers elected to the boards of directors during the exercise of their responsibilities on those boards.

The Workers Bureau also decided to begin a fund-raising campaign for the electoral battle and set up a legal committee made up of several lawyers to counter objections by the Socialist Prosecutor General to candidates. The Socialist Prosecutor in fact began to exercise his powers on 3 May when he summoned and questioned a number of candidates.

The Central Workers Bureau will hold its next meeting on Friday, 23 May, to continue its preparations for the electoral battle.

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BRIEFS

ORGANIZATIONAL PARTY MEETING--A meeting was held last Sunday to discuss organizational matters following the party congress. The meeting was attended by Lutfi Wakid, secretary of the NPUG's Central Committee; Dr Rif'at al-Sa'id, assistant secretary of the Central Committee for Organizational Affairs; Muhammad Khalil, secretary of organization; organization secretaries in the governorates; and several members of the Central Committee. Discussion centered around the organization secretary's concept of the tasks and makeup of the Central Organization Committee. The meeting agreed on the following principles: 1) The party's organizational line in the next phase should reflect the party's political line. 2) Attention should be paid to grass-roots with the aim of preparing solid rank-and-file cadres and rebuilding the basic units. 3) The party should rebuild its units on the levels of districts and sub-districts. 4) Effective contact with intermediary and grass-roots levels should be reinforced. 5) There should be a sorting out of active members and non-active members, and appropriate methods should be devised to insure effective dealing with both elements. 6) The organization committee shall be made up of the secretary of organization, the secretaries of organization in the governorates, and members of the Central Committee who wish to participate and who will be chosen to do so by the Central Committee. 7) The committee shall include a secretariat comprising the following persons: the secretary of the organization committee, a liaison officer for Lower Egypt, a liaison officer for Upper Egypt, a liaison officer for Cairo and the officer in charge of the organizational structure and membership. [Text] [Cairo AL-TAQADDUM in Arabic 15 May 80 p 14] 9254

NPUG SECRETARY VISITS BUDAPEST--Khalid Muhyi al-Din, secretary general of the NPUG, and Husayn Fahmi, secretary of information of the party, left for Budapest to participate in the meetings of the presidium of the World Peace Council. [Text] [Cairo AL-TAQADDUM in Arabic 15 May 80 p 14] 9254

NPUG OFFICIAL VISITS BELGRADE--Fathi Mahmud, member of the NPUG's general secretariat and secretary general of the Arab Commercial Workers Federation, left for Belgrade to represent the party at the funeral of the late President Tito. [Text] [Cairo AL-TAQADDUM in Arabic 15 May 80 p 14] 9254

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1971 SENTENCES ASSAILED--At the suggestion of Khalid Muhyi al-Din, secretary general of the NPUG, the NPUG's general congress has decided to demand "the abolition of all sentences passed by the emergency courts in political cases after May 1971. These include sentences handed down by the Revolutionary Court in case No 1 for 1971 which pertains to the May events; the sentences handed down by State Security Courts; and sentences passed by military tribunals. The party congress also demanded the immediate release of all those who are still incarcerated under these sentences. It is well known that the following persons are still in prison as a result of sentences passed against them following the events of May 1971: former vice-president 'Ali Sabri; lawyer Farid 'Abd al-Karim, former secretary of the Socialist Union in Al-Gizah; Muhammad Fa'iq, minister of information in the era of President 'Abd al-Nasir; and former minister Sami Sharaf. [Text] [Cairo AL-TAQADDUM in Arabic 15 May 80 p 14] 9254

MASSES ACTION COMMITTEE--The Masses Action Committee, still in its provisional form, has held its first meeting under the chairmanship of Husayn 'Abd al-Raziq, the secretary of masses action. Discussion at the meeting dealt with the general framework of the committee's plan of action, implementation of the party congress's resolutions, and a number of urgent issues. These include the elections to corporate boards of directors, the elections to local workers unions, the honoring of lawyers who participated in defending the persons accused in the case of 18 and 19 January 1977, and the resumption of issuing the voice newsletter. The committee will hold another meeting on Tuesday, 20 May. [Text] [Cairo AL-TAQADDUM in Arabic 15 May 80 p 14] 9254

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